

REMARKS

Claims 3 – 8, 19 – 25, 28, 31 and 44 – 49 are pending and rejected.

The applicants cancel the withdrawn claims 25 and 44 – 49, and amend claims 19 and 21 – 23. The applicants do not disclaim the subject matter of the cancelled claims, and reserve the right to prosecute these claims in the future. The applicants amend claims 19 and 21 – 23 not to overcome the examiner's art-based rejection, but to more clearly recite an aspect of the applicants' invention. The applicants respectfully assert that claims 3 – 8, 19 – 24, 28 and 31, as amended, are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed below.

Claims 19, 3 – 8, 20 – 24, 28 and 31

The applicants respectfully assert that claim 19, as amended, is patentable over FR 2618121 (Fremont) at least because Fremont fails to disclose a mission module that contains specialized equipment for performing a specific mission other than providing crew and passengers safe accommodations in the event that the vessel sinks.

Fremont appears to disclose a water vessel whose crew and/or passenger compartment is releasably mounted to the hull of the vessel so that if the vessel begins to sink, the crew and/or passenger compartment can be released from the vessel to provide the crew and passengers safe accommodations until they are rescued. Fremont's crew and/or passenger compartment does not contain equipment for performing a specific mission other than providing safe accommodations should the vessel sink. Therefore, unlike the applicants' vessel, Fremont's vessel does not include a mission module that contains specialized equipment for performing a specific mission other than providing crew and passengers safe accommodations in the event that the vessel sinks.

Claims 3 – 8, 20 – 24, 28 and 31, as amended, are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies on claim 19 as amended.

Conclusion

The applicants respectfully request that the examiner withdraw the rejection against claims 3 – 8, 19 – 24, 28 and 31, and issue an allowance for these claims as amended.

Should any additional fees be required, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

If, after considering this response, the examiner believes the claims should not be allowed, the applicants' attorney respectfully requests that before issuing an Office Action, the examiner call Mr. John Janeway (425-455- 5575) to schedule a telephone conference to further the prosecution of the claims.

DATED this 15th day of February 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

GRAYBEAL JACKSON HALEY LLP



John M. Janeway
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 45,796
155-108th Avenue N.E., Ste. 350
Bellevue, WA 98004-5973
(425) 455-5575